Roxbury, August 4, 1876

Dear Fanny:

This morning the postman brings me your welcome letter, giving the particulars of your journey from Boston to the Glen House, with husband and the children. There is no mother now to receive or to answer it, and I shall be but a very poor substitute.

Tuesday noon, the day you left home, Deborah Weston called to inquire after our welfare, looking almost as fresh and fair as she did twenty years ago. I invited her to take dinner with me, and she did so. She was greatly pleased with your mother's portrait by Billings; and when I told her I thought of getting the artist to retouch it, she (as did Mrs. Dall) earnestly advised against making any attempt to improve it; for she regarded it as very lovely and life-like. I have, nevertheless, taken it

out of its frame, and shall get Billings to make certain slight alterations, which I hope will make the portrait more satisfactory to you children than it now is. Perhaps it will be less so; but I am sure the artist will do his best to meet our wishes, by acting upon any suggestions we may yet offer him.

In response to a letter from Mrs. Chapman, inviting me to Weymouth to spend a few hours there (partly for the purpose of hearing read portions of Harriet Martineau's forthcoming Autobiography), I went down yesterday in the 11.15 A.M. train, and was warmly received as usual. A carriage was waiting for me at the depot, and being joined at the house by Mrs. Chapman, we had a charming ride for an hour about such portions of the town as I had never seen, and they surprised me by their picturesque beauty and attractiveness; including some fine views of the ocean.

Returning, we had a nice dinner of halibut, roast beef, green peas and beans, summer squash and beets, cucumbers, &c., &c. — the vegetables being taken fresh from the home garden. Then we had pie, cake, coffee, whortleberries and blackberries; and all these constituted the "lunch" to which I was invited! I listened, afterward, with deep interest, to the reading of the Autobiographical selections by Mrs. Chapman. The work will make a sensation (particularly its anti-slavery reminiscences of Boston, Webster, Everett, and the like) when it is published.

Wednesday I took a trip to Salem, to see whether I could get the information from town records that Wendell wants as a connecting link in his genealogical chain concerning my ancestors; but I failed to obtain any.

To-morrow Frank and I talk of going down to Newcastle, three miles from Portsmouth, to spend Sunday there,

and take a survey of the locality. Frank, I presume, will be obliged to return home Monday morning; and whether I shall accompany him back, or remain a few days longer, is now problematical. Something may occur to prevent our going.

The weather has been superb ever since you left, but rather cool among the mountains, I surmise. To-day it is quite warm, and clear and brilliant — just the one to make an ascent to Mount Washington desirable.

Our house repairs are not yet completed. The timber of the piazza was found to be so rotten as to need renewal. By to-morrow night that job will be finished. James is commencing his asphaltum task.

This afternoon Lizzie Simmons and her niece will accompany William to Osterville, to remain some ten days.

Nellie, with Katy's help, yesterday made up a considerable quantity of currant jelly. What a solitude is the house!

Your loving Father.